

## Message Text

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ACTION AGR-01

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 INR-10  
NSAE-00 TRSE-00 EB-08 /035 W  
-----098019 152324Z /13  
R 150710Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8632  
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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EO 11652: NA  
TAGS: EAGR EAID ETRN PK  
SUBJ: CRASH PROGRAM TO MOVE WHEAT AND FERTILIZER

REF: ISLAMABAD 7843

1. THE INFORMATION IN THIS MESSAGE WAS DEVELOPED BY THE WORLD BANK WHEAT MISSION THAT RECENTLY VISITED PAKISTAN (ISLAMABAD 7843) AND PASSED ON TO US.

2. IN AN ATTEMPT TO MOVE EXPEDITIOUSLY THE MORE THAN 2 MILLION TONS OF WHEAT AND 1.1 MILLION TONS OF FERTILIZER AWAY FROM THE PORT OF KARACHI BETWEEN NOW AND LATE NEXT SPRING, THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN HAS PLACED UNLOADING AND INLAND TRANSPORT OF WHEAT AND FERTILIZER UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL. ALREADY THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL, IN THE OPINION OF EXPERTS WHO HAVE VISITED THE PORT, HAS DONE A GOOD JOB OF CLEANING UP THE PORT AND INCREASING ITS EFFICIENCY.

3. RECOGNIZING THAT THE REAL PROBLEM MAY BE IN INLAND TRANSPORT TO MOVE WHEAT AND FERTILIZER AWAY FROM THE PORT IN A TIMELY FASHION AND TO DISTRIBUTE IT EFFICIENTLY AROUND THE COUNTRY, THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL HAS BEGUN TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO INCREASE  
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MASSIVELY THE NUMBER OF TRUCKS WITH WHICH TO HAUL FERTILIZER. AT THE SAME TIME, HE HAS ARRANGED THAT ALL WHEAT WILL BE HAULED BY RAIL AND THAT ALL FERTILIZER WILL BE HAULED BY TRUCK. TO REDUCE RAIL TURN-AROUND TIME HE HAS CUT BY HALF THE NUMBER OF RAIL OFF-LOADING POINTS FOR WHEAT. THIS IN TURN WILL INCREASE THE STRAIN ON THE HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM SINCE WHEAT WILL HAVE TO BE MOVED BY TRUCK FROM THE REDUCED NUMBERS OF RAIL OFF-LOADING

POINTS.

4. AT THIS MOMENT, THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL HAS 500 TRUCKS SUITABLE FOR CARRYING FERTILIZER. HE HAS ORDERED FROM THE AUTOMOTIVE CORPORATION OF PAKISTAN, AT A COST OF ABOUT \$9 MILLION, 400 TRUCKS IN THE 8-10 TON RANGE TO BE DELIVERED BY SEPTEMBER 15. AT THE SAME TIME, HE HAS ALREADY ARRANGED TO LEASE 100 TRUCKS FROM PRIVATE OWNERS OR ORGANIZATIONS. THE GOVERNMENT AUTHORIZED HIM TO PURCHASE AN ADDITIONAL 500 12-TON TRUCKS FOR DELIVERY BY DECEMBER 31, AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF \$15 MILLION. THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL WOULD LIKE TO PURCHASE ANOTHER 500 TRUCKS AT A COST OF \$11 MILLION FOR DELIVERY BY NEXT MAY. WE UNDERSTAND HE HAS 8.5 TON BEDFORD TRUCKS IN MIND. HE DOES NOT YET HAVE GOVERNMENT APPROVAL FOR THIS PURCHASE.

5. EVEN THE 2,000 TRUCKS HE WILL HAVE AT HIS DISPOSAL, IF ALL GOES WELL, WILL NOT BE ENOUGH TO MOVE ALL THE WHEAT AND ALL THE FERTILIZER; IN FACT, THE 2,000 TRUCKS WILL BE ABOUT HALF OF WHAT IS NEEDED. THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL PLANS, THEREFORE, TO LEASE FROM PRIVATE OWNERS AN ADDITIONAL 2,000 TRUCKS. THERE ARE ABOUT 50,000 REGISTERED TRUCKS IN PAKISTAN, OF WHICH PERHAPS 40,000 ARE OF A TYPE SUITABLE FOR HAULING FERTILIZER. IF HALF OF THIS NUMBER ARE ENGAGED IN LONG HAUL ROAD TRANSPORT, THIS MEANS THAT THE REQUIRED 2,000 PRIVATE TRUCKS WOULD ABSORB ABOUT 10 PERCENT OF THE LONG HAUL TRUCKING FLEET. IT HAS TO BE ASSUMED THAT LEASING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRUCKS IN SUCH MASSIVE NUMBERS TO HAUL FERTILIZER WILL SHARPLY DRIVE UP FREIGHT RATES. AT THE SAME TIME, THE VIRTUAL COMMANDEERING OF THE RAIL SYSTEM TO HAUL WHEAT WILL PROBABLY FORCE DIVERSION OF SOME GENERAL CARGO FROM RAIL TO ROAD AND THIS SHOULD ALSO INCREASE FREIGHT RATES.

6. COMMENT: IT IS APPARENT THAT PAKISTAN HAS A MONUMENTAL TASK ON ITS HANDS TO MOVE THE WHEAT AND FERTILIZER IT PLANS TO IMPORT. WE ARE, HOWEVER, ENCOURAGED BY THE EFFICIENT AND BUSINESSLIKE WAY THEY ARE SETTING ABOUT IT.  
HUMMEL

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## Message Attributes

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